

Sowerby's figure of *L. Fœnisecii* is not so satisfactory in our opinion as that given by Deakin, although the latter is not so good as could be desired. The cut in Newman's new edition of his 'History of British Ferns' (or rather new work under that name*) is even less characteristic than either of those above mentioned.

We strongly suspect that Mr. Johnson includes some forms of *Cystopteris fragilis* under his *C. dentata*, for we have never seen a specimen of the true plant from Wales, although numbers of fronds so named, but really belonging to *C. fragilis*, have fallen under our notice. He has done well in combining *C. Dickieana* with *C. dentata*, and Mr. Sowerby equally well in giving a beautiful figure of that curious variety.

Mr. Johnson appears to have been almost afraid of stating his opinion that *Asplenium germanicum* is more nearly related to *A. septentrionale* than to *A. ruta-muraria*. We have long thought that this is the fact, and even suspected that *A. germanicum* and *A. septentrionale* might prove not to be separable specifically. It does not seem to us to have any very close connexion with *A. ruta-muraria*. The remarks of the Rev. T. Bell (quoted in Newm. Ferns, ed. 3. 260, from the Edin. Bot. Trans. ii. 119) are well deserving of attention. As observed by Mr. Johnson (p. 57), "it is remarkable that the plant before us should occur both in this country and on the continent in company with *A. septentrionale*, and always very sparingly." This certainly adds to the possibility of their not being really distinct.

It is satisfactory to find that Mr. Johnson has not been led to remove *Pteris aquilina* from its accustomed genus. The name given to his new genus by Mr. Newman is rather unhappily chosen; for the younger Agardh, in his valuable 'Recensio Specierum Generis Pteridis,' places *Pt. aquilina* in the section called by him *Ornithopteris*, not in that named *Eupteris*.

We have much pleasure in recommending Mr. Sowerby's book to the notice of our readers.

First Steps in Economic Botany, for the use of Students. By THOMAS CROXEN ARCHER. London: Reeve, 1854. 12mo.

There are, perhaps, few subjects upon which more ignorance prevails than the origin and nature of the numerous products of the animal and vegetable kingdoms which are in daily use amongst us, and it is

* We are sorry to see the opinion that we expressed in favour of the second edition quoted as if it was necessarily applicable to the so-called third edition. The great change that has been made in the names, in some cases to the total neglect of the recognized laws of botanical nomenclature, renders this last book far less valuable than its predecessors, and we do not think that some of the other alterations made in it are judicious. The introduction of an erroneous nomenclature into a book written for popular use is especially to be deprecated, as it tends greatly to the establishment, amongst lovers of plants, who are not scientific, of a set of names which botanists must reject.

a disgrace to a country like this, which professes to be pre-eminently practical, that so little attention should have hitherto been paid to furnishing the rising generation with some sound general information on a subject which should be of so much importance in a commercial community. The knowledge of "common things" does, however, at present appear to be making some little progress amongst us, and the present little work, which contains a brief account of the principal commercial products of the vegetable kingdom, forms a welcome addition to our scanty stock of elementary books on these subjects.

It appears to have been brought out under the auspices of the "Department of Science and Art," and we presume will be adopted as a class-book in those educational establishments which derive their inspiration from that source. The conception of the work is good, and appears to have been well and carefully carried out. We must observe, however, that the author's acquaintance with chemistry appears to be rather imperfect;—at least on those occasions where he has, unnecessarily as it appears to us, introduced any chemical information, his statements are generally calculated rather to mislead than to instruct the student. Thus, at p. 145, we are informed that the non-oxygenated essential oils "are very inflammable, burning like coal-gas, of which they appear to be a mere concentration;" and again, at p. 140, we are told that "oleine and stearine are oxides of a peculiar substance called by chemists *glyceryle*, . . . in other words, oleine consists of an acid called *oleic acid* and this sweet substance *glyceryle*, whilst stearine is a compound of *stearic acid* and *glyceryle*,"—from which it would appear that the author has no very definite idea of what is meant by an oxide.

It is greatly to be regretted that such errors as these should have been allowed to creep into a book, which, in other respects, has certainly much to recommend it, and it is not much to the credit of the "Department of Science and Art," whose head certainly has some pretensions to a knowledge of chemistry, that blunders of this nature are to be detected in a work published under their auspices. It is not sufficient that an educational work should be unimpeachable as regards the particular subject of which it treats; care must also be taken that its pages are not made the means of inculcating false notions upon those branches of science which are only incidentally referred to.

We may add that the work is illustrated with twenty lithographic plates, representing some of the more important plants, and a few of the commercial products referred to in the text: these appear to be exceedingly characteristic.

The Entomologist's Annual for 1855. Edited by H. T. STANTON. Second Edition. London, 1855. Van Voorst. 12mo.

It is not long since we noticed, in the pages of this Journal, the appearance of the first edition of this little work, and we must congratulate the editor on his miscalculation of the number of his